

#23

CHRISTIANS
Christ's Representatives and Agents

FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD,

AND

SELF-DENYING LOVE AND LIBERALITY

ESSENTIAL TO

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

AND

HAPPINESS.

BY THOMAS SMYTH, D.D.

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"As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."—John xvii. 18.

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"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."—Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20.

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"The believer in Jesus Christ is the universal benefactor ; and it is by such free giving of his free receivings, that he not only enriches the world, but that he obtains grace for grace, and augments the strength, the beauty, and the happiness of his own soul. By such scattering he increases."—DR. JAMES HAMILTON.

"If any man doubts whether, as a Christian, he is bound by the terms of his discipleship, to aid by prayer, self-denying sacrifice, and personal exertion, in preaching the gospel to every creature, let him, as the Duke of Wellington once appropriately and graphically said, 'look to his commission, and there find his marching orders.'"

"'Take my yoke upon you, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.' Truth, Lord ! a light burden, indeed, which supports him who bears it. I have looked abroad through nature to see if I could find anything that could bear some analogy to this ; but I cannot find it, unless it be the wings of a bird, which, while borne of the creature, bear him aloft. In truth, to bear the Lord's burden is to be permitted to cast it, together with ourselves, into the arms of Omnipotence and Grace."

—BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX.

S E R M O N I.

I. EVERY one who receives the Bible as "given by inspiration of God," must believe that it will be all verified through the working of that infinite wisdom and power with which He makes all things to conspire for the fulfilment of His purposes, so that "though Heaven and earth may pass away, one jot or tittle of all He has said shall in no wise pass away till all is fulfilled."

II. Every believer in the Bible must therefore be convinced that the kingdom of Christ is destined to extend its spiritual conquests until it shall include within its dominion all kingdoms and nations. Nothing can be more explicit than the repeated declarations of this purpose, contained in the word of God. "I will declare the decree. The Lord (*i. e.* Jehovah) hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee! Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." This is a part of the decree which has been covenanted by the Father to the Son in "the counsel of peace that was between them both," which therefore all nations and kings are commanded, at their peril, to recognize and to be in subjection unto Christ. (Psalm 2; see also Psalm 110.) This is no doubtful interpretation of this same decree. We have another account by the prophet Daniel (7: 13, 14, 27); "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds (the myriad host) of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve

Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions (or rulers) shall serve Him."

This dominion was assumed, and established, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid its foundation in His finished work of obedience unto death, and secured its ultimate and certain accomplishment by His resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, and His resumption as "Head over all things for the Church" of that "glory which He had with the Father from before the foundation of the world." When, therefore, after His resurrection, our Saviour appeared to the assembled members of His kingdom, as then existing, who were gathered together by His special appointment, He said unto them: "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth: go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

We repeat, therefore, our declaration, that every man who believes in the Bible, and in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, must also believe that the kingdom of Christ is destined to be universal.

Everything about it is universal, and nothing local, national, temporary, or exclusive. "Christ its King and Redeemer is the Saviour of all men," and "the propitiation for our sins, but not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." As "God our Saviour, He will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." "He gave Himself, therefore, a ransom for all to be testified in due time" unto all.

The knowledge of this Saviour, and of the propitiation made by Him for the sins of all in the world who believe upon Him, is the gospel,—*the good spell*—"the glad tidings which shall be to all people,"—"good will unto men." As this gospel is "everlasting," so it is universal, and to be proclaimed "unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

The provisions, the promises, the commands, the obligations, the ordinances, the sacrifices, the benefits, and blessings of this kingdom are equally and alike for all men. It has no respect for per-

sons, and makes no exceptions. It regards every man as a sinner, and guilty before God, and sweeps with the "besom of destruction" all the sublunary distinctions and differences among men. In the administration of this kingdom "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female," there is neither high nor low, rich nor poor, wise or foolish, learned or ignorant, Saxon or Celtic, European, Asiatic, African, or American. "All are one" out of Christ, equally helpless and hopeless, and "all are one in Christ," "for all are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

This great fundamental truth, which levels all human distinctions in one common type of sin and misery, and melts all human relationships into one common brotherhood, and one common fatherhood—God in Christ—is made equally certain by negative, as well as by positive teaching. For as Christ is the Saviour of all men, so that "whosoever of the sons of men believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life," so also is it declared from heaven that "neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, by which any man can be saved." "He, therefore, that believeth not on the Son of God (be he who or what he may) shall be damned. He is even condemned already, because he hath not believed on the only-begotten Son of God, and the wrath of God abideth on him."

But further: as this kingdom of Christ is thus universal in its provisions and in its administration, so is it uniform in the mode by which men secure the appropriation of its blessings. Salvation can be appropriated, by any human being, only through the exercise of faith. This is the only possible medium by which that which is external to the soul, that which is spiritual, invisible, or founded upon the testimony of another, can become ours. Christ and his salvation can, therefore, become the joyful experience of any soul only through faith, by which, "though now it sees not Christ, yet believing upon Him, it rejoices with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." The exercise of faith, in order to salvation, is thus made essentially pre-requisite, not by any arbitrary arrangement on the part of God, nor by anything peculiar in the gospel, but by the very constitution of the human mind, and of the world around it. All knowledge, and therefore all conduct, since this depends on knowledge, and all the happiness or misery of life are based ultimately on the principle of faith.

But as faith is based upon the certainty of testimony and the authority and veracity of the testator, in order to its possible exercise, that testimony and that authority must be present to the mind. Man, as a rational being, can only believe when he has, what he regards as, sufficient authority for what is believed. He may be grossly deluded and deceived, but he believes, because ignorant of, or unwilling to admit, the delusion. For a man, therefore, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and in salvation through Him, and to have that peace with God which is the consequence of such faith, he must necessarily possess sufficient knowledge of Christ and of the salvation He has accomplished. This is what is so logically, so philosophically, and, at the same time, so authoritatively, taught by the Apostle Paul (Rom. 10 : 13). After stating the universality of the gospel, and that faith is the only condition made necessary for its reception, "For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved," he goes on to ask, "How, then, shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the (preaching of the) word of God."

In every point of view, therefore, in which they can be considered, the kingdom of Christ and the gospel of the kingdom (whether we regard them as founded on the decree of God or as established by Christ), with all their provisions, promises, means of grace, and mode of appropriation, are universal, adapted to man as man, free and full to all alike, and offering to every creature, in all the world, "the unspeakable gift of God's only begotten Son, so that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have everlasting life."

May it not, then, be laid down as a first principle, an incontrovertible truth, that every one who truly believes in the Bible and in Christ, as the Saviour of the world, must also believe that His kingdom and gospel are designed to be as universal as the family of man?

III. We proceed to make another remark, and that is, that, as in accordance with the will and word of God, the kingdom and gospel of Christ are designed to be universal, and as all the resources and attributes of Deity must be considered as pledged for the fulfilment of this purpose, every one who truly believes the

Bible, and in Christ as there revealed, must believe that this universality will be brought about through the agency of man.

This is the only way by which, in consistency with man's nature, as a free, rational, and responsible being, and in accordance with the analogy of God's government in the natural world, the kingdom of Christ can become universal.

We might conceive it possible for God miraculously to convey the gospel of this kingdom, by angelic or human agency, to every nation, singly and individually. But besides being in contrariety to the whole analogy of the divine government, such a method would be contrary to the generic, fundamental laws of unity, simplicity, and representation. It would involve an unnecessary multiplication of causes for the production of a desired result, in contrariety to those great laws by each of which, singly and alone, we see innumerable results constantly secured. It would break up the human race into individuals, in violent opposition to every organic principle of human nature, and of the divine procedure in all departments of the natural world, and it would contradict that principle of representation by which the many are bound together under one law, one centre of influence, one head or representative. This law is found lying at the foundation of all order, both in the natural and moral government of God, in the family, the community, the state, the kingdom, and the world at large, and is the basis of all association, intercourse, and business between different individuals and countries.

As this method, therefore, would involve the adoption of supernatural, miraculous, and anomalous agency, where natural means might be employed, the only plan left for the universal extension of the gospel and kingdom of Christ, was the appointment of some one people, nation, or church, prepared for the purpose by proper training, provided with all necessary evidence, knowledge, gifts, and graces, and under the assurance of divine guidance, efficiency, and success—as witnesses, heralds, and instructors of their fellow-men.

Such a plan is in perfect accordance with the whole analogy of the natural world and with all the laws mentioned. It recognizes the unity of the human race, their common nature, their common origin, apostasy, and ruin, their participation in the same miseries and forebodings of that judgment which is after death, the com-

mon salvation and Saviour, and the one and only way in which any man can become a partaker of this "so great salvation."

This plan is adapted, therefore, to the nature of man, as well as to the principles of God's government in the natural and moral world. There is a perfect congruity between the plan and the agent who is to carry it out. Man is an active being, and finds all his powers developed by exertion, without which he is unhealthy, unhappy, useless. Man is a social being, and can find full play for his faculties, and perfect enjoyment for his desires and affections, only in companionship and association with his fellow-men. Man is endowed with the gift of language and with intelligence to learn from others, and to communicate knowledge to them, and in doing so he is aided by the marvellous power of the human voice, with its accompanying tones, looks, sympathies, and gestures. Man is a fearless, enterprising being, fond of travel and of change, capable of endurance, and nerved by danger and exploits, and can thus roam the earth in search of adventure, and inhabit every climate. Man was designed, and ought, to be a benevolent being, capable of love, and pity, and generosity, and disinterested philanthropy. He is sensitive to calamity, touched with woe, sympathizing with distress, and impelled to acts of charity and labors of love by the whole power of his affections, and the commanding authority of his conscience requiring them as his duty. Happiness, therefore, according to the very constitution of man's nature, is connected with activity in doing good to others; and a man might just as reasonably expect to be happy in the solitude of a desert, or to be in health without food, as to be happy in the indulgence of a selfish inactivity. Millions have tried the experiment, but with the same result. In proportion to their capacity to do good, and their devotion of that power to selfish purposes, they have destroyed their own true felicity, like Swift, one of the most selfish as he was one of the most talented of men, and of whom Archbishop King said that "he was the most unhappy man on earth." "And surely it is a striking testimony to the divine benevolence, that God so arranged the world that every generous impulse does as much for the giver as the receiver, while a man is never so happy as while intent on the happiness of others."*

Man is also a spiritual being, possessed not only of bodily powers, and senses, and appetites, but of mind and heart, by which he comes into contact with other minds and hearts. He finds that

as face answereth to face in a glass, so does the heart of man to man, and that independently of all other means of communication, men can enter into each other's feelings, rejoice with each other when they rejoice, and weep with each other when they weep; and that through the medium of language spoken and written, they can convey to each other their ideas, their sentiments, and their convictions.

Man is therefore a representative being. He is a type and model of his race. In himself he has all the essential laws and principles of humanity, personal and yet homogeneous—individual and distinct, and yet a link in the chain, a drop in the ocean of life, a ray in the sunshine, a pulsation of the common heart. Everything common to man is his, and nothing strange. Bearing the stamp of the same original and the same degradation, he can therefore stand up among his fellow-men, and from the admitted principles of a common experience tell them of their sins and sorrows, and need of salvation, by unfolding to them his own.

To all this we would add that man is a religious being, capable of knowing, loving, serving, and finding his supreme and only satisfying happiness in God. As such, man cannot but admit that his relations to God are his highest, his obligations to God unspeakable, his duty to God paramount. He must feel that as God is the common Father of all men, all men are brethren, and that as it is his "first and great commanded duty to love God with all his heart, and soul, and strength, and mind," so is it his "second" great duty to "love his neighbor as himself," to love the soul of his neighbor even as he loves and values his own soul, as infinitely more important than anything that is merely temporal, and to do unto the souls of his fellow men, in the communication of spiritual good, even as he would desire and feel it right, and kind, and merciful, in others, to communicate unto him that spiritual good on which depends his everlasting life.

"He who needeth love, to love hath right;
It is not like our furs and stores of corn,
Whereto we claim sole title by our toil,
The God of love plants it within our hearts,
And waters it, and gives it sun, to be
The common stock and heritage of all."

IV. It has thus been shown that man is so constituted as to be not only adapted to the work of extending the kingdom of Christ, but to be incapable of the full development of his nature and the

full measure of his happiness, except in active exertion and self-denying charity, and prayer, and interest in this glorious end and aim of life. It was, therefore, necessary for the happiness and the moral elevation of man, that the fulfilment of this great purpose of God should be entrusted to his agency as a "steward of the manifold mercies of God," that in blessing others he might himself be blessed, and find by experience that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Man's chief end was that he might glorify and enjoy God. To enjoy, however, he must glorify. His will must be conformed to God's will, his life to God's law, his aim to God's purpose, and his whole heart to God's service. This was the spirit of Christ as our incarnate exemplar, and filled His heart with joy, so that He counted it even as meat and drink. This is the spirit of angels, and makes angels what they are—holy and happy. This is the spirit of heaven, and fills heaven with satisfying blessedness. This, too, was the spirit of primeval man, while as yet he was unacquainted with grief, and untainted with sin.

Indeed, this spirit animates all the works of God. "For others and not for myself" is the life of all that lives, the growth of all that grows, the existence of all that exists. It is the utterance alike of animate and inanimate nature. In the light that enlivens us, the air that sustains us, the water that purifies us, the earth that nourishes us—in the deep mines that warm, and enrich, and garnish our persons and our habitations—in all the beauty, the grandeur, and the sublimity of nature—in every flower that blooms and sheds its fragrance—in every tree that spreads its branches so as to delight the eye, and ripens its fruit so as to gratify the taste—in every shower that waters the earth, and every dew-drop that glistens in the morning ray—everywhere, and in everything, we find written, "not for myself but for others." Most surely, then, will this be true of man who was made in God's image, but a little lower than the angels, God's exemplar, representative, and almoner upon earth. "No man liveth unto himself" is the law impressed upon his nature, the condition of his being, the pre-requisite of his well-being, the inflexible rule and measure of his worth, and the inexorable awarder of his proportionate recompense in present enjoyment and ever-abiding happiness.

A man, therefore, who lives unto himself is an anomaly in the universe. He is the only being and the only thing, in all the creation of God, that so exists. He is a moral monster, ugly, mis-

shapen, deformed, without natural affection, an abomination in the sight of God and of all holy beings—"earthly, sensual, devilish." Yes, selfishness is the law of Satan, not of God; of human corruption, not of human nature; of man fallen, not of man upright. It is sin, and guilt, and misery. It is the black and damning proof of man's rebellion against God, and subjection to the Evil One. It undermines man's nature, God's law, earth's happiness, heaven's holiness, the very throne and majesty of God. It has driven out legions of apostate angels from heaven, peopled earth with criminals, and hordes of beings more reckless and ruthless than the beasts of the forest, prepared hell for the devil, his angels, and ungodly men, and filled every breeze that blows with the sounds of weeping, and wailing, and bitter lamentations.

In the plan of redemption we may be very sure, therefore, that—as it is designed to remedy man's great calamity, renovate his corrupt nature, and reinstate him in holiness and happiness, in the service, glory, and enjoyment of God—man will become the instrument, in God's hand—made effective by God's working in him and with him—of proclaiming peace and good-will to men, the dominion of love, the reign of charity, and the universal brotherhood of the human family. Man will himself be made, by the power of God through the gospel of His Son, the pattern of renovated and redeemed humanity. Exorcised from the spirit of selfishness, and possessed of the spirit of love—love to God, love to Christ, and love to the souls of men, he is "compelled" to go forth among his fellows, proclaim to them "the unsearchable riches of Christ," tell them "what God has done for his own soul," and as "the Spirit and the Bride say come," to say "come, that whosoever will may come, and take of the water of life freely." Man's individual good is thus promoted while securing the good of others. "Self-denial is made the cure of selfishness." Living for others invigorates and establishes the true life of man, and serving Christ, following Him, enduring the cross, and counting all things but loss for the honor of His name and the advancement of His kingdom, fills the heart with peace and joy, and enables it to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

"This holy work, this heavenly task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God."

V. Such, assuredly, is the nature and design of the gospel in its operation upon the heart of every individual believer of it. Salvation is so imparted as to create in every recipient of it the desire to impart that salvation to others, and a spirit of self-denying charity, liberality, and effort to extend the gospel and the kingdom of Christ, according to his ability, to every creature.

"The blessed God," whose "glorious gospel" it is, liveth not for Himself. He is the parent of all good, "the Father of lights from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift." Ages before the creation of man He established the foundations of his future habitation, laid up in store-houses, all ready and prepared for his use, everything that was necessary for his future comfort, and beautified and adorned it with all that is rich, varied, and delightful to the most refined taste. And when man had plunged himself into the abyss of misery, God, who had hitherto worked for his temporal comfort, "so loved him as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have everlasting life." God has thus made Himself known in the gospel as LOVE, that we may learn that LOVE is the spirit by which He "brings us back unto God;" that "love is the fulfilling of the law;" that in loving Him we will love also our fellow-men; and that if we are not actuated by a spirit of charity and benevolent exertion for them, the love of God cannot dwell in our hearts.

• Christ as the author and finisher of our faith, the subject and the spirit of the gospel, its altar sacrifice and priest, its foundation, superstructure, and security, its life and power—Christ liveth not for Himself. "He loved us and gave Himself for us." He gave up the glory "which He had with the Father from before the foundation of the world," that He might come down to earth to "seek and to save us who were lost." He entered into our nature, assumed our earthly relations, trials and toils, endured our griefs and carried our sorrows, and was on all points tempted even as we are, that in this body of flesh, in this earthly life, and in this world of duty and of danger, He might set us an example that we may follow in His steps. In a representative world, under a system of universal representation, in a nature eminently and in every way representative and represented, He became THE REPRESENTATIVE of humanity, "the second Adam," that "as in Adam all died, so in Christ all," who become related to Him by faith, "may be

saved." "He did not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him." "He pleased not Himself." "He went about His Father's business." "He went about doing good," "bearing reproach, receiving evil for His good done," malevolence for His kindest actions, and persecution, even unto blood, for His God-like devotion to the interests of humanity. Self-denial was the spirit of His life, self-sacrifice the character of all His actions, and love—living not unto Himself but for others, for strangers and even enemies—the very element in which He lived, and moved, and had His being.

VI. Now, what Christ was, Christianity is, and Christians are to be. Christianity is the religion of Christ; the worship and service of Christ; union to Christ by faith, which is His own gift and the fruit of His spirit; love and devotion to Christ; living not unto ourselves but unto Him who redeemed us with His own precious blood, that we might be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. To be a Christian is to live by the faith of the Son of God; to live with Him, to live as Christ lived, to do as Christ did, and to have the spirit of Christ. If Christ is the Vine, every Christian is a branch, nourished with His sap, growing by His life, blooming with His fragrance, and bearing fruit "for the healing of the nations." If Christ is a head, every Christian is a member, acting in unison with that head for the accomplishment of its purposes of "grace and mercy." Christ is the divine Sculptor. From Him sprang the glorious ideal of regenerated man. He Himself became the mould and type of man "upright," man "holy, harmless and undefiled;" knowing no sin, neither having guile in his heart; living among them, and yet "separate from sinners;" in it, and yet not of, the world, and unspotted by it; "diligent in business, and yet fervent in spirit, serving God," and having his affections set on things that are above." And as the sculptor hands over his model to his workmen, that they may imitate and reproduce its likeness, guiding them by his eye and correcting them by his skill, so does Christ give into the hands of His disciples His divine model, that under His eye, and the power of the Holy Ghost working in and with them, in quickening and transforming energy, they may be His instruments in fashioning other hearts, and making them "new creatures in Christ Jesus." "As we have borne the image and the spirit, and the selfish life of the earthly Adam, we must also bear the image of the heavenly." The form, the features, the benevo-

lent expression, the tones of melting tenderness, the words of love and power, the life of goodness, the doing good to all men, will all be transferred to "the living epistle seen and read of all men," written not on tables of stone but on the fleshy table of the heart "of every one who is chosen of God," and "changed into the image of Christ."

The universal law of Christ is, "if any man will come after Me," that is, come out from the world and be separated from it, renouncing its dominion and authority, and becoming subject unto Christ, "he must deny himself." He must renounce all claim to be his own property and his own master. He must make the will of Christ, and not his own will, the authority and obligation of his actions. He must make the word of Christ, and not his own opinions or the opinions of others, the rule and measure of duty. He must make love to Christ, and not love of self, the motive of all his actions, and he must make the cause of Christ, and the kingdom of Christ, and the glory of Christ in the salvation of souls, and not money-making, or money-hoarding, or money-spending, the end and object of his life. To human nature as it is, this is a heavy "cross," but it must be borne; a mortification of the body, but it must be suffered; and a crucifixion to the world, but it must be "offered up." "Transformed by this renewing of his mind," and receiving power and grace from Christ, the believer follows Him, through evil and through good report, in doing good and abstaining from evil, "willing to communicate, ready to distribute, and zealous in all good works."

The Christian is a good soldier of Jesus Christ, "sworn liegeman of the cross and thorny crown." Christ is now "the commander and leader" of his soul, "the captain of his salvation." "The field is the world." The "banner given him" to unfurl in the cause of truth and righteousness, is the banner of salvation, the gospel of the grace of God. This "word of life" he is to "hold forth." Under this he is to march. After this he is to follow. For this he is to "fight manfully the good fight of faith." Around this he is to press. To this he is to cling in every fiery assault of the adversary. And to plant this on every fortress of the enemy, and see its white pennons floating in the winds of heaven, and carrying with it the assurance of victory and of peace, and good will to the vanquished; this, oh this, is the exultant joy of every loyal heart as he shouts glory to His divine and exalted Saviour.

As the gospel knows no distinction, and Christ's kingdom no limit of time or place, or people or country, so is it with the Christian. To him there is no home and foreign missions *in principle*, though for convenience and division of labor, as in the science of the several kingdoms of God's one universal dominion, he may admit the distinction. But in Christ there is no difference except that of destitution, ignorance, barbarity, and relative precedence in their bearing upon the universal ultimate result. All such distinctions are founded in selfishness and not in love, in temporary and not permanent relations, in physical and not in spiritual qualities. They are not of the Father but of the world, founded in man's present weaknesses and wants, and terminating with his present sublunary condition. They indicate to man the *order* but not the *limits* of duty, where he is to begin and how he is to proceed, but not the boundary within which his love, and charity, and labor are to be circumscribed. Piety must begin in the individual heart. We must then "learn to show piety at home," in the family, in the church, in the community. But it will not, cannot stop there. If it does, it is selfishness under the garb of religion. It is carnal and worldly—the good olive branch grafted on the stem of the original wild olive tree of the natural heart. Such a man "loves his own," and in so doing what does he more than others? Do not even infidels and Christless men the same. If he did not do this much, would he not be "worse than an infidel?" and in merely doing this, therefore, he can be no better. This, when made a substitute for Christian piety, is hypocrisy.

"The gospel is the expression of God's love, and the believer is a man who, filled with Heaven's emanating kindness, becomes in his turn a living gospel. There is an ecclesiastical Christianity, and there is a dogmatic Christianity. The former regards it as the main thing to belong to a particular church; the latter lays all the stress on maintaining certain doctrines. But the Christian of the Bible, while he is all this, is also a great deal more. By believing what God reveals, he becomes what God desires—a holy, devout, beneficent presence in society; a sick world's healer; a sad world's comforter; a sympathizer and a fellow-worker with the Supreme Beneficence." Remembering

"That, throned above all height, He condescends
To call the few that trust in Him His friends;
That, in the Heaven of heavens, its space He deems
Too scanty for the exertion of His beams,

And shines, as if impatient to bestow
 Life and a kingdom upon worms below ;
 Like Him the soul, thus kindled from above,
 Spreads wide her arms of universal love ;
 And, still enlarged as she receives the grace,
 Includes creation in her close embrace."

In other words, important as are soundness in the faith and steadfastness of principle, these are but the roots and stem from which spring love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness; and it is hardly uncharitable to doubt if that man's piety be true which does not visit the fatherless and afflicted, as well as keep itself unspotted from the world. True piety is the life of God in the soul. It is a transfusion into the disciple of the mind of the Master. It is a ray of the divine gladness kindling the human heart, converting it into a living sacrifice, and filling all its circle with such a fragrance, glow, and brightness, as can only be created by fire from heaven.

The roots and stem, therefore, without the fruits, is but the assumption of the *name* of Christian without the *spirit* which animates and characterizes it. It is "faith without works, which is dead." It is the spirit of the flesh, saying like Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It is the spirit of the self-righteous Pharisee, asking, "Who then is my neighbor?" and "passing him by on the other side" as you carry home your "good things" to your family and kindred. True piety is light set on a hill, unobstructed by any barrier, and shedding its rays far as the eye can reach. It is leaven which, while it must be cast in at some particular spot, and diffuse itself from it as from a centre, never rests until it has leavened the whole mass. And thus, also, is it compared to salt, which if it loses its power of savoring any portion of the fluid, is good for nothing.

Piety restricted to self, or family, or kindred, or church, or country, is not therefore Christianity. It contradicts the gospel, in its provisions, promises, commands, ordinances, obligations, and blessings. It is not the spirit of Christ; He knew not even His own mother, according to the flesh, when "about His Father's business," and has declared, that "whosoever doeth His will, he is His mother, and sister, and brother." While His body was in Judea, His heart, His prayers, His prospective blessings were everywhere, and with all who should hereafter believe on Him,

to the end of the world. While in order to "fulfil all righteousness" and all prophecy, He personally went no farther than Judea, and required His disciples to begin at Jerusalem, and there await the outpouring of the Spirit, He commanded them not to tarry there, but to "go far hence among the Gentiles, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ to every creature. For thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Christ loved man as man, as "enemies," as "ungodly," as "without strength," "without God and without hope." To have the spirit and the love of Christ is, therefore, to love the souls of perishing men, and to the utmost of our ability and opportunity, to "save them from death." This only is "the love of THE SPIRIT" with which Christ imbues every believing heart, renewing them in the spirit of their minds and enlarging their desires and efforts so as to comprehend the wants and woes of a perishing world.

Oh Thou, who keep'st the key of love
 Open Thy fount, eternal dove,
 And overflow this heart of mine,
 Enlarging as it fills with Thee,
 Till in one blaze of charity,
 Self and its will are lost, like motes, in light divine.

VII. But not only is such piety not Christian—it is anti-christian. Is Christ divided? Is the kingdom of Christ divided against itself, or partitioned out into national, sectional, and family compartments? Can I circumscribe Christ in His claims, blessings, and requirements, by me and mine, by white or black, north or south, bond or free, home or foreign? Nay, if I do, "I am none of His." For if any man love father or mother, or family or kindred, or country, more than Christ; if he do not hate them all for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, that is, hold them in subordination to the higher and paramount claims of both, he is none of Christ's. He cannot be Christ's disciple. Christ never knew him. He is not with Christ, but against him. He is a rebel, a traitor, an unfaithful steward, a disobedient son, a wicked and slothful servant, hiding his lord's talent in a napkin, or burying it "like a crock of gold in a coffin."

Christ did not leave this matter to mere precept and example.

He has made it impossible for any man who is not wilfully blind, to believe a lie so palpable, and a delusion so gross, as that a piety whose spirit, principle, prayers, sacrifices, and effects, are limited by home, or church, or country, is Christianity. He has done this by identifying himself with a perishing world, and with the poor and miserable, and blind and naked, and outcast, wherever and whosoever, they be. Like as a father is represented by every member of his family, and a prince by every one of his subjects, and a government, whether municipal, State, or national, by every one of its citizens, so that what is done for the one is done for the other, and what is done against the one is regarded, and resented, as done against the other, so it is with Christ as He stands related to all those who are "perishing for lack of knowledge." The heathen are His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth His possession. In them we see Him. By them is He represented and brought within the reach of our neglect or kindness. And according as we do unto them, we do likewise unto Him.

But as Christ is represented in the mute objects of charity and compassion, so is He also in the agents of His bounty, to whom He has imparted gifts, graces, and "the gold and silver which are the Lord's." In the one Christ represents himself passively; in the other, He is represented actively. In the one He is the object and the recipient of charity; in the other, the agent and the donor. In the one class of representatives we see His resources, His power, His munificent benevolence, His free, sovereign, and disinterested compassion. In the former class we behold—as John did the earthly mother, to whom Christ pointed while on the cross, saying, "woman, behold thy son"—the deep misery of humanity, its need of salvation and a Saviour, its helpless hopelessness, its inability and indisposition even to its own spiritual good, and the absolute necessity that, in order to be saved, man must be drawn "with the cords of a man," melted by kindness, unprejudiced by love, and thus made willing to come to Jesus. In every Christian, the world sees,—expects, and ought to see—one who exhibits the traits and temper of Christ,—who feels that he is "in Christ's stead,"—who acts as he thinks Christ would have acted if in his circumstances,—and who does unto others what he believes Christ would have rendered unto them, and not what is dictated by his own self-interest. In all the trying conditions of humanity Christ lived.

He knows well what they are, and what they imply, for He has felt the same, "though without sin." He is able to sympathize both with the sufferer, and with the agents of His intended bounty. He knows the individual, personal worthlessness of the one,—so far as any claim of merit or desert can reach,—and his unrequiting and ungrateful spirit. And He knows the unselfish, disinterested labor of love required on the part of His servants. On this very account, however, does Christ regard that labor as love to Himself, and lay up for it a grateful recompense in the world to come,

For 'mid the throng of selfish hearts untrue,
His glad eye rests upon his faithful few.

This is no figurative representation. It is a plain and unquestionable verity, in conformity to all human principles of equity and of action, and the proclaimed rule, not only for testing the sincerity of our present faith, and hope, and love, and charity, but for judgment in the courts of heaven, and by which the future destiny of every man will be determined. (Matt. 25.) No man, therefore, can have any difficulty in understanding what is the will of Christ, the spirit of Christ, and the command of Christ, since He has identified Himself with His kingdom, and made our faith, and love, and obedience coextensive with the Gospel—that is, with the entire brotherhood of humanity.

The conclusion, therefore, is irresistably plain, that every man who believes in the Bible and in Christ, must believe and feel that it is his first and paramount duty, as a Christian, to identify himself with Christ and His kingdom, and to live so as by his instrumentality to extend that kingdom, as far as his means and opportunity will enable him. Faith in Christ will shed abroad in his soul love to Christ, and this will constrain him to live so as to please, and honor, and glorify Christ by obeying His commandments, imitating His example, and laboring for the salvation of a world lying in wickedness.

Wouldst thou the life of souls discern,
Nor human wisdom, nor divine,
Helps thee by aught besides to learn;
Love is life's only sign.

The spring of the regenerate heart,
The pulse, the glow, of every part,
Is the true love of Christ our Lord,
As man embraced, as God adored.

The heart which loves the Lord aright,
 No soul of man can worthless find,
 ALL will be precious in his sight,
 Since Christ on ALL hath shined.

VIII. Such is God's instrumentality for the universal establishment of the kingdom of Christ and the universal diffusion of the knowledge of salvation. MEN are put in TRUST, and made responsible for this work, and to them will pertain the glory or the shame, the honor or disgrace, the victory or defeat, the recompense or retribution, "since in God's stead" they are made ambassadors and witnesses, and co-workers with Him.

Such has ever been God's plan. Salvation for the world, through the knowledge and belief of the good news of a divine incarnate Saviour, has been the TRUST put into the hands of the Church, that is, of the people of God, from the very beginning of the world. The fulfilment of this trust was made man's great work and business upon earth. For this was a dispensation of goodness and mercy vouchsafed to him, through the mediation of Christ, and the long-suffering forbearance of God. He pursues other work, and eats, drinks, marries, and is given in marriage, that he may live; but he lives that he may work out his own salvation and the salvation of others, and thus honor, obey, and enjoy God. To this work is man consecrated and life devoted. The "seed of the woman," from the beginning, recognized and received this trust. The echoes of their loud and earnest warnings and appeals to the unbelieving world around them, come to us through distant ages, and over the waters of the flood, crying, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." And when God's people waxed faint-hearted and worldly, and that voice died away amid the sounds of merriment and the hum of business, the flood came and swept an unfaithful and unbelieving generation from the earth.

THE GOSPEL FOR THE WORLD was then put in trust with Noah and his seed, and afterwards with Abraham and his seed, "in whom all the families of the earth were to be blest," and then a single nation was chosen, educated, chastened, corrected, and purified in the fires of persecution from idolatrous tendencies, that they

might be God's faithful witnesses in the earth. And as the descendants of Noah and Abraham were dispersed abroad over the earth that they might carry with them, and sow, the incorruptible seed of divine truth to take root and flourish in all lands, so also when the Jews failed to execute their mission, they were peeled and scattered, and constrained to bear the Scriptures and the knowledge of a Saviour into the most distant climes. So long, and so far, as they were faithful stewards and evangelists, they prospered, and entered most prominently into the history of the world. But when selfishness and self-seeking pride became their ruling principle, and they refused, as a people, to become the heralds of their incarnate Saviour, the body died. They became barren and corrupt, until finally the nation was annihilated and became extinct, broken off and severed from the good olive tree, instead of being developed into full maturity, beauty and fruitfulness by union to Christ Jesus.

IX. This TRUST of the gospel was therefore taken from them and given to Christians who are of the seed of Abraham, and to whom is now given the high calling, the glorious privilege, and the most paramount and transcendent of all duties, that of conveying the gospel and extending the kingdom of Christ to every creature. This duty comprehends, includes and inspires every other Christian work, and is therefore enjoined upon believers in the one expressive and final command of the departing Saviour, and reiterated and enforced by His subsequent communications from heaven. It is made by Him the basis of success, the law of progress, the source of life, permanency and prosperity, the condition of His promise, presence and divine efficiency; the test of obedience; the measure of love; the way of self-imparting peace and joy; and the rule of future recompense. Recognition of this principle, adoption of this spirit, living by this rule, and consecration to this work, are therefore essential to Christian character and life, to faith, love loyalty, obedience, spirituality and happiness. How can a man believe the gospel and not say "come" to those who are perishing for lack of its knowledge, which he is required to proclaim? How can a man receive Christ and enter into union with Him, and not desire to "draw all men unto Him?" How can a man imbibe the spirit of Christ and not travail in soul for "the salvation of all men"? How can a man bring his will into unison with the will of Christ by praying always with all prayer, "Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," and not feel the extension of that kingdom and the consummation of His "will that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," to be his highest and holiest purpose? How can a man be the servant of Christ and be sent by Him into the world, even as the Father sent Him into the world, and not live and labor for the promotion of that great work of which Christ laid the foundation, and which He has "hired them as laborers" to carry on? How can a man "honor the Lord with his substance," and prove that his love to Christ is greater than his love of property and wealth, and not willingly communicate and cheerfully distribute it to the furtherance of the Gospel, and to the support of Christ's ministers and cause? How can a man love Christ and show gratitude to Him, and not endeavor to secure for Him "the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession"? And how can a man be animated by the love of the Spirit, and not conspire in his great mission, that of "convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment"?

Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely Thy gifts should be restored;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is "freely give"—

He only who forgets to hoard,
Has learned to live.

Pastors and elders, people, all
Should feel the showers of mercy fall,
And starting at the Redeemer's call,
Give what He gave,
Till their high deeds the world appal,
And sinners save.

X. And as it is with individual Christians so it is with churches. What is fundamental to the one, both as to principle, life, duty, and prosperity, is essential to the other. A church is made up of individual Christians, and is under obligation to believe, profess and to do, what is required of each and all its members. The only difference, is in the increased measure and weight with which the pressure of the powers of the world to come, and the divine command with its solemn TRUST rest upon churches. If every Christian is to be a light, the church is a luminary. If every Christian is a workman, the church is a combination of laborers under efficient master

workmen. If every Christian is a soldier, the church is a phalanx, with its bold, daring and gallant leaders. If an individual Christian is weak, or poor, or uninfluential, the church is proportionably strong, competent and powerful. And if, therefore, the recognition of the gospel as a TRUST, and the extension of the kingdom of Christ as the primary duty of life,* is essential to the character, progress and prosperity of every individual Christian, much more is this the law of every church.

XI. How plain it is, and yet, oh! how little is it understood and felt, that Christian activity, and sacrifice, and contributions for the cause of Christ, are not things expedient, important and beneficial MERELY; not what a Christian is at liberty to do or, if inconvenient, not to do; not matters which depend upon our ability, or means, or supposed capacity. They are elements of Christian character and life; the fruits and evidences by which the Spirit witnesses that we are born of God; acts of worship; acceptable sacrifices unto God; and means ordained by Him for the spiritual good of His people and His own glory through them. They are not acts of charity, the promptings of impulse. They "involve the integrity" and growth of "Christian character." They are invariable and universal. Like faith, repentance, prayer, and praise, they will be manifested by every Christian, and by every church "according to that which they have" and are. Inactive, selfish and uncharitable they cannot be, for "it is not to be presumed," as has been said, "that God gives an individual or a people a soul niggardly from meanness, parsimonious from covetousness." These acts and exercises of Christian life must, therefore, in all cases, be developed according to our resources. No Christian liveth unto himself. No church liveth unto itself. If they do, they will dwindle, languish, and like the heath in the desert that knows no water, remain stunted and dwarfed, and finally perish.†

* Matt. vi. 31.

† "The use of our property furnishes one of the most striking developments of the heart. We are bound, therefore, to make use of it to show our love for God—our attachment to his cause. It is the most efficient method within our reach of declaring the glory of God to a world of sinners. It shows the subjection of our selfishness, and the triumph of the Spirit of Grace in the heart, and over the life. It brings to view, as nothing else can, the heaven-born principle of benevolence in its control of human conduct. It shows the transforming power, and the unspeakable beauty and loveliness of the religion of the cross, and speaks strongly to the hearts and consciences of men, to turn unto God, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

And is not this the reason why so many Christians and churches do actually live at such a poor dying rate, so cold and languid, so barren and unprofitable.

A fouler vision yet, churches of light—
Light without love, glare on the aching sight.

They look to themselves, not to Christ. They consider their own things, not the things that are His. Like the fearful and unbelieving sinner they are seeking for peace, and prosperity, and blessing, not in the way of cheerful and confiding obedience, but as direct gifts from God. They can do little, and therefore they do nothing. They can give but a small sum, and, therefore, give none at all. Their influence is limited, and therefore they roll it up carefully and hide it in the earth. They cannot grow and strengthen and mature because they are "always learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth," always desiring and never "DOING the will of God," and, in so DOING, receiving His promised blessing and assurance. They sit cold and shivering, lean and hunger-bitten, rubbing their hands together and wishing they were warm, instead of rising up, and invigorating and warming their hearts by acts and exercises of Christian charity and well-doing.

And so it ever will and must be. He that liveth to himself shall not prosper and cannot be happy, and that church which liveth to itself shall not receive the blessing of the Lord; the eternal law of God's government in nature, providence and grace, will so determine it. "Faith without works is dead." "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly, while from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work."

XII. What blind infatuation, what deplorable ignorance is it, then for any christian, minister, or church, to plead its weakness, feebleness, poverty, and its manifold necessities and wants, as a reason for living in inactivity, forgetful of this unalterable relation between sowing and reaping, labor and recompense, liberality and reward. Self-denial, sacrifice, and the contribution of our property according as God hath prospered us (not grudgingly, for

the Lord loveth a cheerful giver), are made by Christ essential to our christian hope and happiness. The poor widow gave but two farthings, but it was "all that she had," and she gave it and was blessed. The churches in Macedonia "out of their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of liberality," and were blessed. And so must every Christian and every church give, and labor, and pray for the kingdom of Christ and the salvation of the world, if they would receive the full blessedness of the Gospel. There is not a member of our churches in this country that could not spare something and "lay it by in store, weekly," for this divine cause. There is not a member, in any of our churches, that could not increase, or double, or multiply an hundred fold, what he now offers unto Christ, if he really believed that in so doing he would please Him, profit himself, and bring a rich return of blessing to his own heart. There is not a minister who could not so present this matter to his people as to lead the weakest and most impoverished congregation in our land to feel that it was a duty, a privilege, and a blessing to give, and to give freely, in proportion to their means and other expenditures, to the work of the Lord. And there are thousands of our largest and most liberal givers, who, were their minds thoroughly imbued with the conviction that they are agents, stewards, and trustees for Christ's kingdom and gospel, and that the blessing comes far more in giving than in receiving or increasing gain, would not increase their contributions and their efforts, in some cases thirty, in some sixty, in some an hundred fold.

XIII. Liberality, activity, and devotion to the cause of Christ, is the true way to personal prosperity and peace, and to the favor and blessing of God. In the kingdom of heaven, as in God's moral government, obedience and reward are correlatives, and inseparably conjoined, even when apparently divided. In loving and living to God, we truly love and live to ourselves, and promote our own happiness here and hereafter. We are under obligations to seek and to secure our best interests, however, in that way which only God has pointed out. A righteous, enlightened, and sanctified love of ourselves is made the measure of our love to others. A man not only *may* but *must* love himself. This he must do, by acquiring a perfect knowledge of his relations to God, and His law, and of the paramount importance of the honor, glory, and kingdom

of God, and what is spiritual and eternal, over all bodily and temporal interests. Whatever pertains to the salvation of our own soul, its sanctification and growth in grace, and its everlasting felicity, we are under primary obligations to "work out," according to the will of God; and as this is to be done by activity, sacrifice, service, and liberality, in the cause of Christ's universal reign and triumph, as surely as by reading the Scriptures, by prayer, and praise, every Christian is bound to be as faithful, as hearty, as zealous and exemplary in the former, as in the latter. This is essential to the right and required love of self, to personal salvation, and to our own individual Christian character, hope, happiness, and heavenly recompense. It is only in this way a man can truly love God, be made a partaker of the divine nature and of the divine benevolence, overcome the spirit of worldly selfishness, which is idolatry, subdue all self-will and all self-opinionated prejudices to the authority of God's will, as made known in His word, and "lay hold firmly of eternal life," secure "the pearl of great price," "the treasure hid in the field," "lay up treasure in heaven," gain "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom," make sure of "an eternal weight of glory," "reap abundantly," "be great in the kingdom of heaven," "build upon the foundation" of a good hope in Christ Jesus, "gold, and silver, and precious stones" that shall abide forever, transport his riches to heaven, be "followed by his good works" in their ever-during results, "shine forth as a star of brilliant glory in the firmament of heaven," and having well and faithfully employed his talents for the glory of his Lord and master, receive a crown of righteousness, and be applauded with the welcoming gratulation, "well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

This assuredly is the only way in which a man can "work out *his own* salvation," which is his one great business here below, by living, laboring and praying, giving and invoking so as to secure permanent and everlasting riches "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal."

And yet, under the delusion of laying up treasure for children and friends—a temptation and a snare to drown them in perdition and in sloth, and in prodigality and vice—oh, how do men, yes, even Christian men, live poor, and meanly, and niggardly, and die poor, and go into eternity poor, with few or no friends to

welcome them, no works to follow them, no treasure exported before them, and no inheritance invested in heaven?

Yes, look around the church of which we are each members, and of how many may we say, as has been strikingly said, here is an acquaintance of ours, and he has been spending the energy of a very good understanding, of exceedingly strong will, or well-formed habits, in conducting business and making a fortune. He owes no man anything. He assists the struggling poor. And he says, I have invested something for every one of my children. But what, we may ask such an one, have you invested for yourself? You ought not, with all your love for your children, to think only of them. What do you propose to invest for yourself? This is the question, and it is a business one. You have but one way of investing money permanently. You may invest it in houses, or in lands, or in banks, but when the great fire comes that will burn all that up, and your beautiful mansion will be no more to the flames than the dust you tread on, what portion of your property is invested for you, and will reappear after the fire, to enrich you forever? None, but what you have given up to God—literally and absolutely none but what you have consecrated to the Saviour—what you have consecrated to the poor—what you have given out of love to Christ and love to other men. This is in Christ's hands, and all and only this, and He will remind you of it, and show it to you in another shape at the last day. Oh, what a word that is, "Make to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." These earthly friends for whom you live and toil and hoard, cannot procure a habitation; they cannot prepare a habitation; they can give no title to a habitation; all that being done by the free grace of your Father through the alone merit of your Saviour and Redeemer. The title being given, and the house being prepared for you, by Him, make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into everlasting habitations. A wonderful thing it is to take a cold shilling into my hand and turn that cold piece of metal into a friend, who, when the Lord shall lift up my head on that day, will be there to receive me, and bid me welcome to the land of rest. None of us would like to die poor. Who is he that dies rich? That man dies rich, and only that man, who, when he leaves behind him a little or more, or nothing, has before him a treasure laid up in heaven.

Who dies poor? He that, whatever he leaves behind him, has nothing laid up before him. He dies poor.

XIV. No man therefore liveth to himself; the law of universal nature, the law of man's own being, the law of providence, and the law of the kingdom of heaven alike forbid and prevent it. And yet these laws equally require, as we have seen, every man to love himself, to live for himself, and to seek and secure the highest good of his own entire and permanent being. There is here a divine paradox but no contradiction. "He that findeth his life (in living for himself) shall lose it, and he that loseth his life (by denying himself) for My sake, shall find it." "For whosoever will save his life (from this self-denying course) will lose it, and whosoever will lose his life (of personal ease, indulgence and aggrandizement) for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain (for his present sensual and temporal life) the whole world and lose his soul, or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels, and then shall He reward every man according to his works." In the Christian the present natural and sinful life of selfishness is dead and crucified with Christ. He has "denied this self" by "the power given to him by Christ to become a son of God." This life, therefore, he "loses," and "findeth the life" of faith, and love, and consecration to God in Christ. "The life that he now lives, therefore, he lives by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him and gave Himself for him. "I live," says the Christian, "but not I. It is my Beloved that liveth in me. I love myself, not with my own love, but with the love of my Beloved, who loveth me. I love not myself in myself, but myself in Him and Him in me."

Nor time, nor place, nor chance, nor death can bow

My least desire unto the least remove ;

He's firmly mine by oath ; I His by vow ;

And knit we are by strongest bonds of love :

He's mine by water ; I am His by wine ;

Thus I my best Beloved's am ; thus He is mine.

He is my altar ; I His holy place ;

I am His guest ; and He my living food ;

I'm His by penitence ; He mine by grace ;

I'm His by purchase ; He is mine by blood ;

He's my directing helm ; and I His vine ;

Thus I my best Beloved's am ; thus He is mine.

He gives me wealth ; I give Him all my vows ;
 I give Him songs ; He gives me length of days ;
 With wreaths of grace He crowns my conquering brows ;
 And I His temples with a crown of praise
 Which He accepts ; an everlasting sign
 That I my best Beloved's am ; that He is mine.

Feeling thus, the Christian "lives no longer unto self but unto Christ," and yet, nevertheless, in living unto Christ, and in yielding body, soul, and spirit, wife, children, houses and lands, as a living and loving sacrifice unto Christ and the interests of His kingdom, he secures his own salvation, his own peace, and joy, and happiness, the presence and blessing of God in all he does and on all he loves. "For every one who hath forsaken (the selfish appropriation, and holds in trust, and for the glory of Christ) houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

For any man to live to himself is monstrously sinful, and for any professing Christian to do so, is to exaggerate such guilt by the most flagrant insult, hypocrisy and fraud. It is the most daring presumption and rebellion against the glorious majesty and greatness, the perfect holiness, infinite all-sufficiency and goodness, and the absolute power and supremacy of that divine Lord and Master, to whom he has sworn allegiance. It is ingratitude black as hell, mingled with rebellion daring as that of devils, against Him to whom we owe ourselves, and all that we are or have, or hope, inasmuch as it takes the very members, faculties, talents, and opportunities, which are His—redeemed, regenerated and consecrated by Him, for His own service and glory—and employs them, like the unfaithful servants, for our own selfish purposes.

Oh what indignity, what wickedness against a jealous God is this! But such selfishness is not only suicidal. It gains nothing! It can only treasure up indignation and wrath against the day of wrath. After all, no man really lives unto himself. He may pervert and prostitute the being and the powers entrusted to him. He may live, and labor, and eat, and drink, as he thinks, for himself. But he lives for others and for God. Of all the earth he can possess at most but little, and enjoy but little, and for a very little time. All his labor and strength, he makes all and accumulates, and invests and hoards, and spends, he does for others. His life, his spirit, his principles, his conduct, are all act-

ing upon, and impressing and influencing, others. For good or for evil, for weal or woe, for salvation or damnation, he is living for others. Soon he dies; his grasp relaxes; his titles are all extinguished; his name and his memory rot like his body, and are forgotten. The place of business, the rounds of duty, the haunts of pleasure, the home of selfish indulgence, the bank, the courts, the exchange, "know him no more for ever, and he has no further interest in anything that is done under the sun."

No man, therefore, can live unto himself. Equally but still more fearfully true is it that "no man dieth unto himself." He dies under this law of universal being, and of Christ, and under its penalty. He dies as he lives. He dies to all further enjoyment of this world and this life, and these means and opportunities of extending the gospel and kingdom of Christ, and of saving souls from death. He dies to meet that judgment which is after death, and as he has here "sown the wind" of his own selfish, covetous and indolent indulgence, he reaps the whirlwind of sorrow and disappointment, and everlasting regret—"for there is no place for repentance."

Man can do nothing of himself but sin, and nothing that is right or acceptable in the sight of God; and when by grace he does all he ought to do, to the utmost of his ability, he is an unprofitable servant, sinful and imperfect. The acceptance of his services and gifts, and the entrustment to his hands of "the high calling" of being a servant unto God, for the benefit of the perishing world, is the gift of Christ's infinite goodness; and the recompense of reward with which it is followed, the bestowment of His free, sovereign, and unmerited munificence. But this only makes selfishness and disobedience, and eye service, and love of family and friends, while there is mean niggardliness towards Christ's cause and kingdom, the more disgracefully foul and abominable in the judgment of heaven and earth.

XV. Brethren, what is to be done? Something must be done. We cannot remain as we are. The best of our ministers, and churches, and members, but feebly realize and act according to the great law of living unto others, unto Christ, and for the salvation of the world. Many, however, feel, or do but little to show that they love Christ, or value His promised presence, by keeping His last great and all comprehending command. But what is incredible to believe, and beyond measure humiliating to tell, one-

third of our ministers, elders, churches, and members, give not the evidence of a *single reported dollar*, of any recognition of their duty as pure, Christ-loving disciples, to coöperate in the proclamation of the gospel, and the extension of the kingdom of Christ to every creature. These principles were fully and ably presented by our last General Assembly, and wisely urged upon the practical consideration of our Presbyteries, and enforced upon our church sessions generally.*

XVI. But still, the great practical hindrance remains, and that is, to get these views and principles into the minds and hearts of those ministers and churches who seem "to take their ease," and fold their hands, and go to sleep in Zion, and who neither read, nor hear, nor feel the power and cogency of these truths. And to reach this ultimate end, what other method is there left to the church, than for each presbytery to adopt the course of voluntary and mutual interchange of pulpits, so that brethren, appointed by presbytery, and clothed with its authority, may kindly but faithfully, and as often and long as may be necessary, stir up the hearts and minds of "all who call upon the Lord Jesus," to the remembrance of their relation to Him and to His Kingdom, and of the inseparable connection established between obedience, activity, and liberality, and their own spiritual life, maturity, power, and progress.

Here, then, is something we can do. It is simple, scriptural, unexpensive, in accordance with our spirit and principles as a church, and implied in the injunctions of our General Assembly. We have the Gospel. It is given to us in TRUST for "the heathen" and "the uttermost parts of the earth," as "light to enlighten the Gentiles." Of this TRUST every Christian, still more every deacon, more emphatically still every elder, still more solemnly and responsibly every minister, and—to an extent which combines in itself the responsibility and the ability of all these severally—EVERY CHURCH is a steward, who will be honored and recompensed in proportion as they are "found faithful." This truth is power—"the power of God to every one" that "receives it into a good and honest heart," and whose "faith works by love." To impart this truth, therefore, and to make it effectual in the hearts of our brethren, who either misconceive or but partially believe it, is a part of the very trust and agency committed to us. In love

* See the Report and Resolutions on Systematic Collections, added as Note B.

to them, in love to the Church of God, whose honor, and influence, and power, and prosperity are involved—and in love to the souls of perishing men, and to Him, “the travail of whose soul” they are, let us avail ourselves of every means within our reach of bringing up all our ministers, churches, officers, and members, to the right knowledge of Christ and keeping of His commandments, which is the complete work and business of a Christian,—conformity to Christ, and unison of heart, will, spirit, and purpose, with Him, is the very being of a Christian, without which he is without Christ as the source of life and the spring and fountain of happiness.

XVII. Brethren, would we be honest? There is one debt we owe, which is ever pressing upon us, which we can never fully pay, which we must be ever owing and ever paying, and in so doing experience “an over-payment of delight”—and that is “to love one another, to love and do good to all men as we have opportunity,” that “through our mercy they may receive mercy.” Are we paying punctual interest and constant dividends on this debt, and thus in giving receiving, in scattering abroad increasing, and in blessing being blessed, yea, so blessed as to have the windows of heaven opened, and a blessing poured out upon us in such measure that we shall not be able fully to receive it?

Would we, as Christians, be happy, and live in peace and joy? Then we must live in love. Christian happiness is society, fellowship with God in Christ, with angels, and with saints. God is love, and every one that loveth is born of God. “If any man love God he is known of God, and so knows God.” “He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.” Love is the nature of God, and the element of Christian life—love to Him that begat, and to all those that are begotten of Him. Love shines as a light into the Christian’s heart, acts as a torch or a fire within him. His knowledge of Christ inflames his love and hatred. “Because he sees Him, he at the same time abhors himself,” and is transported with the love of Christ shed abroad in his heart. Thus humble and happy, he cannot restrain his feelings. He is consumed with an inward and irresistible desire for others that they also may be saved. Every soul saved is a soul to love, a new well-spring of joy, an object of wonder and delight, another child added to the family of God, another companion in tribulation and in trial, another star lighted up in the firmament of heaven, and sparkling in the crown of the Redeemer, another harp, with his, to swell the song of the Lamb before the throne.

Hosanna, sound from hill to hill,
 And spread from plain to plain,
 While louder, sweeter, clearer still,
 Woods echo to the strain.
 Hosanna on the wings of light,
 O'er earth and ocean fly,
 'Till morn to eve, and noon to night,
 And heaven to earth reply.

Brethren, we have but a day in which to live, and labor, and work, and that day is far spent. The night is at hand, when no man can work. We have but one season in which to prepare for ourselves a plentiful harvest, and the spring is past, the summer is gone, and the harvest season nearly over, and we can only reap according as we have sown. We have but one life and one body, "to spend and be spent for Christ," and as "herein He is now glorified if we bear much fruit," so "will He render to every man who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seeks for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life."

Brethren, what mean these aches and pains, and this weariness, and these often infirmities, these wrinkles, and hoary hairs, and other failings of our natural strength? Oh, are they not all designed to show us that our stay here is short, our connection with earth transient, our continuance in this earthly house but as that of the wayfaring man who turneth aside from his far journey for a night?

Oh, let us, then, now enter into fellowship with Christ in the work given Him to do, and which he has commanded us to "fill up—even that which is behind and still unfulfilled, of the universal efficacy of the sufferings of Christ," and "the glory that is to follow" the preaching of the Gospel, "whereof we are made the ministers" or agents. Christ, though in the form of God and being God, entered into fellowship with us in all our infirmities, nay, in our miseries, in our sin and guilt, in our condemnation and death, in all our pains and penalties, in all our sorrows and solitudes. To be able thus to sympathize with us, and succor and save us, Christ united Himself with our very nature, and became A PROPITIATION FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD. Having done all this He now invites us to enter into fellowship with His divine nature, with His gifts and graces, His glory and blessedness, His death, resurrection, and ascension, His ever-living power and presence with His people,—by preaching the good tidings to every

creature in all the world, making them His disciples, and teaching them His will. To have such communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, is the honor, the dignity, and the happiness of the believing heart. Oh, then, being exalted to such a heavenly privilege, let us not be like brute beasts, understanding it not, but rather let us rejoice in it, and count all things but loss for the excellency of being lifted up from death and pollution to this fellowship with the throne, the society, the friendship, and the service of the Great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Oh, let Him come in and take possession, and have full and transforming fellowship with these cold hearts of ours, these dead and carnal affections, these low and grovelling desires, and with whatever in our hopes and powers, our influence and activity, our money and our means, He will be pleased to use for His glory, and our mutual endearment and happiness. This, yes this, will be the felicity of heaven, and this, yes this, may impart to us heaven below, and, in the full exercise of this grace, ripen into an early blossom the fragrant flowers of Paradise.

And as it has pleased Christ in His infinite wisdom and mercy to represent Himself as present and visible in these poor and perishing souls around us, and in these heathen who are His inheritance and heirs to His testamentary blessings, oh, Thou divine and blessed Saviour, who canst give power and quicken into life, oh, give us faith to look upon them as such! Help us to look through their unworthiness, their vileness, their ingratitude, their hard and impenitent and blinded hearts, and to see in them Thee, our Lord and our God. As strangers, let us take them in. As sick with the foul leprosy of sin, as bound in the prison of the great adversary who leads them captive at his will, as hungering and thirsting and yet spending their strength for naught and their labor for that which satisfieth not, help us to visit them, to give them the bread of heaven and the water of life, and in so doing to feel that we are doing it all to Thee, and that we shall in nowise lose our reward, when Thou, our righteous Judge, shalt say to all such "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Give us, then, O divine and merciful Saviour, faith and love, to break through this selfishness, this self-seeking, this world-

liness, this covetousness which is idolatry, this flesh-lusting spirit, which freezes up our warmest affections. Help, oh help us to bring these objects of Thy love, which are distant, near; to render them visible to the eye of our minds though unseen; to make them present though absent; creditors though debtors; friends though foes; dear and beloved though black and uncomely; and all this because they are Thine and dear to Thee, and yet to be brought nigh and given to Thee for Thy possession.

Most blessed Saviour! Thou who only art
 The sacred fountain of eternal light,
 All-powerful magnet of my inmost heart!
 Oh, Thou, my heart's desire, my soul's delight!
 My soul irradiate and Thy power impart,
 And then my soul shall prize no good above Thee,
 And then my soul shall know, and knowing, love Thee,
 And then my trembling thoughts shall never start
 From Thy commands or swerve the least degree,
 Or even desire to move but as they move in Thee.
 Thus living, loving, serving Thee below,
 Do Thou Thy strength, Thy grace, Thy peace bestow.

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us. Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us."—Psalm lxvii. 1-6.

"It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory," Isa. lxvi. 18. "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it; and many people shall go and say, Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths," Isa. ii. 2, 3. And again, "Behold, thus saith the Lord, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon

their shoulders," Isa. xlix. 22. And again, "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that know not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee," Isa. lv. 5. O blessed, then, ever blessed be thy name, O mighty and most merciful Saviour, who hast been pleased to make Thyself known among us Gentiles. "Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength; give unto the Lord the glory due to his name," Psal. xcvi. 7. "All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee, they shall sing unto thy name," Psal. lxvi. 4. "All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee," Psal. xxii. 27.

Ye who your Lord's commission bear
His way of mercy to prepare;
Angels He calls ye; be your strife
To lead on earth an angel's life.
Think not of rest, though dreams be sweet,
Start up and ply your heavenward feet.
Is not God's oath upon your head,
Ne'er to sink back on slothful bed;
Never again your loins untie,
Nor let your torches waste and die,
Till when the shadows thickest fall
Ye hear your Master's midnight call?

NOTE A.

As this is a truth which enters into our conclusion of the obligation and duty which this constitution implies, I will give some illustration, of it. The late Amos Lawrence, among his *private* entries has the following: "Jan. 1, 1849. I adopted the practice ten years ago, of spending my income. My outgoes since the first of January, 1842, have been upward of \$400,000, and my property on the first of this year is as great as on Jan. 1, 1842. The more I give, the more I have." Again: "Jan. 1, 1852. The outgoes for all objects since Jan. 1, 1842 (ten years), have been \$604,000 more than than five-sixths of which have been applied in making other people happy." Here is an example of reproductive profusion,—“The more I give, the more I get;” scattering, yet increasing. And, along with the increase of substance, what is still rarer and more precious, the increase of personal felicity. Instead of scattering, had he concentrated all this outlay on himself, had he spent the half million on dainty viands and costly wines, on sumptuous furniture and glittering vehicles, he would have done no more than many do, on whose careworn, dissatisfied countenances, God has inscribed the curse of self-idolatry; but by spending it in the effort to make other people happy, Amos Lawrence extended the sphere of his enjoyment as wide as the objects of his philanthropy, and in his shining face he habitually showed that God had given him the blessedness of a man for whom many prayed and whom He Himself greatly loved.

So essential to the truest enjoyment is a generous disposition, that we cannot refrain from quoting the words of one whose kind deeds were almost as numerous as his brilliant sayings, and who gives the following “Receipt for making every day happy:”—“When you rise in the morning form the resolution to make the day a happy one to a fellow-creature. It is easily done; a left-off garment to the man who needs it, a kind word to the sorrowful, an encouraging expression to the striving; trifles in themselves, light as air, will do it, at least for the twenty-four hours; and, if you are young, depend upon it it will tell when you are old; a if you are old, rest assured it will send you gently and happily down the stream of time to eternity. By the most simple arith-

metical sum look at the result; you send one person, only one, happily through the day; that is, 365 in the course of the year; and, supposing you live forty years only after you commence that course of medicine, you have made 14,600 human beings happy—at all events for a time. Now, worthy reader, is not this simple? It is too short for a sermon, too homely for ethics, and too easily accomplished for you to say, 'I would if I could.'"

What Sydney Smith recommends was the practice of Cotton Mather, two hundred years ago. Few men have ever condensed into the narrow limits of human existence so much substantial service to their fellow-creatures as that good man, whose name is still a household word in New England homes. And it would appear that it was his custom every morning when he awoke to consider these three things,—What is there I can this day do for the welfare of my family? What is there I can do in the service of my neighbor? What is there I can do for the glory of God?

Of this principle, Sydney Smith affords a most pertinent example of what the experience of Wilberforce, Howard, every philanthropist, missionary, and liberal-minded and liberal-hearted Christian will confirm.

I was very poor, says he, till I was appointed to St. Paul's. The valuable living of Edmonton, which was in the gift of St. Paul's, fell vacant. By the rules of the Chapter, he could have taken it himself, or given it as he pleased. The late vicar, Mr. Tate, was a friend of his own, who, years before, as a Yorkshire clergyman, had stood up with him in favor of Catholic Emancipation. He left a family behind him, his eldest son having been his curate; and Sydney Smith writes to his wife the following account of his interview with the widow and family, after he had determined to give the cure to the son of his old friend, in place of giving it to himself:

"DEAR KATE,—I went over yesterday to the Tates, at Edmonton. The family consists of three delicate daughters, an aunt, the old lady, and her son, then curate of Edmonton:—the old lady was in bed. I found there a physician, an old friend of Tate's, attending them from friendship, who had come from London for that purpose. They were in daily expectation of being turned out from house and curacy. . . . I began by inquiring the character of their servant, then turned the conversation upon their

affairs, and expressed a hope the Chapter might ultimately do something for them. I then said, 'It is my duty to state to you (they were all assembled), that I have given away the living of Edmonton; I have written to our Chapter-clerk this morning, to mention the person to whom I have given it; and I must also tell you, that I am sure he will appoint his curate. (A general silence and dejection.) It is a very odd coincidence,' I added, 'that the gentleman I have selected, is a namesake of this family. His name is Tate. Have you any relations of that name?' 'No, we have not.' 'And by a more singular coincidence, his name is Thomas Tate. In short,' I added, 'there is no use mincing the matter; you are vicar of Edmonton.' They all burst into tears. It flung me also into a great agitation of tears, and I wept and groaned for a long time. Then I rose and said, I thought it was very likely to end in their keeping a buggy, at which we all laughed as violently.

"The poor old lady, who was sleeping in a garret, because she could not bear to enter into the room lately inhabited by her husband, sent for me, and kissed me, sobbing with a thousand emotions. The charitable physician wept too. . . . I never passed so remarkable a morning, nor was more deeply impressed with the sufferings of human life, and never felt more thoroughly the happiness of doing good."

"I never was happy," said a certain king, "till I began to take pleasure in the welfare of my people; but ever since then, in the darkest day I have had sunshine in my heart."

NOTE B.

"It is not to be presumed," says our last General Assembly in its Report on Systematic Contributions, "that God gives people a soul niggardly from meanness, or parsimonious from covetousness; and yet their contributions to the treasury of the Lord are amazingly disproportioned to their blessings and resources. This can only be resolved into ignorance of duty, or a failure to apprehend the real relation of liberality in alms-giving to their Christian profession. As "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," so whatever does not appeal to their faith cannot permanently interest their hearts. It cannot be denied that our churches have been too much accustomed to look upon giving as purely a matter of Christian liberty, a thing which might or might not be done, according to the impulses which happen to prevail at the moment, without in either case involving the integrity of Christian character; what has been given, has been regarded as a bounty, and those who solicit it represented as beggars. This has been a feeling implicitly recognized where it has not been explicitly announced.

"Appeals in behalf of the dearest interests of Christ's kingdom have been in many cases coldly received, in others formally repulsed, on the plea of repugnance to so much begging.

"It was not that the people were penurious or mean, but that they did not understand the nature of the case; and the way to remove the difficulty is not by denunciation or invective, but by familiar exposition of the scriptural principle upon which these appeals are made. The law of the Lord, when clearly apprehended, can never fail to tell upon the hearts and consciences of the children of God. That law in relation to the question before us, is, that liberality is a grace of the spirit, alms-giving an office of Christian worship, and collections for the poor and the spread of the Gospel an ordinance of God.

"Giving, in the Scripture, is put upon substantially the same basis as prayer, the one is the sacrifice of the lips, and the other of the substance; and the acceptance of our gifts is a greater proof of the Divine condescension, than the acceptance of our petitions. God needs none of our offerings; "the cattle upon a thousand hills are His, and if He were hungry He would not tell us." But though

needing nothing at our hands, He has condescended, for the purpose of uniting our hearts to Him in profounder sympathy, to assume a position in which He appeals to us as really and tenderly as if He needed all things. Though our alms and our righteousness extend not directly to Him, yet the Saviour is comforted and refreshed with the humblest ministrations to His saints upon the earth; it is He who receives the cup of cold water administered to His disciples. The believer, accordingly, who enters into the spirit of the Christian doctrine, must feel it almost hardly less a grievance to be debarred from the throne of grace, than to be prevented from casting his mite into the treasury of the Lord, and would as soon think of turning Christ from his doors, or leaving Him unvisited in sickness and in prison, as think of slighting the appeals of Christ's earthly kingdom to his contributions and his sympathies. It is Christ whom we honor in serving the interests of His kingdom, or rather it is Christ who honors us, in thus permitting us to honour Him, and as all Christian duties are at the same time privileges, and every precept stands upon a promise, so the child of God habitually experiences that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." He is the beggar who solicits the favor of having his gift accepted, and he feels it to be a distinction that he can glorify God with the fruits of his substance, having given himself to the Lord. All that he possesses is equally devoted, and what he uses for himself is rather by permission than by right of property. It is this principle which makes alms-giving a species of thanksgiving, and gifts a part of our spiritual worship. This principle underlies the whole subject of Systematic Benevolence.

"The recognition of this principle, in its fulness and energy, is all that is wanted to infuse new life into the Church, and to make our offerings commensurate with our resources.

"Alms-giving being at once a duty and a privilege, an ordinance of God and a means of grace, it is manifestly incumbent upon the Courts of the Church to impart this, as well as every other blessing of the Gospel, to the Christian people. Any believer has a right to complain that his soul is neglected, and that the fulness of his Christian inheritance impaired, if he has not the opportunity of presenting his gifts as well as of hearing the word. The General Assembly accordingly has done no more than it was bound to do, in enjoining upon the Presbyteries 'to adopt some practicable method by which an opportunity shall be afforded, and an in-

vation given to all the members of their congregations to contribute regularly to the objects of Christian benevolence, recognized by the Assembly in the organization of the Boards of the Church, and to such other institutions as to them may seem right.'

"But it is not enough that the Assembly should command in the name of Christ, it must also see that its injunctions are obeyed, and hence it has required an Annual Report from every Presbytery in its bounds, of the diligence of Ministers and Church Sessions in complying with its requisitions. Therefore our General Assembly enjoins upon the pastors and churches to give greater prominence in the ministration of the word, to the doctrine of the Scripture as set forth and interpreted in our standards, (more particularly chap. 26, sec. 2 of the Confession; in quest. 121 of the Larger Catechism; in chap. 7 of the Form of Government; and in chap. 6, sec. 5, of the Directory for Worship,) namely, that 'saints are, by profession, bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion, in relieving each other in outward things according to their several abilities and necessities, which communion, as God offereth opportunities, is to be extended unto all those, who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus,' 'giving and lending freely according to their abilities, and in conformity to this doctrine, recognizing as one of the ordinances established by Christ,' in connection with the sermon, prayer and praise, a 'collection raised for the poor and other purposes of the Church.'

"2. *Resolved*, The Presbyteries, which have not anticipated the provisions of this action of the Assembly, are most earnestly and affectionately enjoined, (1) at their meeting following the rising of this Assembly, to take order that the ministers and church sessions in their bounds, shall be directed to adopt *some practical method*, by which an opportunity shall be afforded, and an invitation given to all the members of their congregations, to contribute regularly to the objects of Christian benevolence, recognized by the Assembly, in the organization of the Boards of the Church, and to such other institutions as to them, may seem right.

"And (2) at every spring meeting to institute a proper inquiry into the diligence of ministers and church sessions in executing the provisions of such method.

"3. *Resolved*, The Presbyteries are further enjoined to enter on record and report to the next General Assembly, their action on the first part of the foregoing resolution, and also to record at their

next and all subsequent spring meetings, the result of the inquiry prescribed, and report the same to the General Assembly, with the usual Annual Presbyterian reports, stating the delinquencies and diligence of pastors and church sessions."

Never did our church, or any other, more plainly and practically hold forth the truth on the relation of Christian activity and liberality in the cause of Christ and to all Christian prosperity and progress, than in the principles and provisions here set forth.

We trust they will be universally responded to by all the Presbyteries in our Church, in the same spirit in which they were acted upon by the Presbytery of Huntingdon, at its recent meeting, when it adopted the following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, 1st. That love to Christ's cause is an essential element of Christian piety, and a regular *communication* of our worldly substance, according as God hath prospered us, an ordinary and important part of practical religion.

"2d. That accordingly, it is as much the duty of the pastors and officers of the churches to make arrangements for the cultivation of the grace of benevolence, for the performance of this part of practical religion, as for any other of the offices of religion. Therefore

"3d. That it be affectionately enjoined upon the Pastors and the other appropriate officers of the churches, to adopt and put in efficient operation, some plan for making regular collections for the four Bounds (and Church Extension Committee) of the Church, so that a contribution for each shall be made at least once every year.

"And it is further enjoined, that one or other of the following plans be adopted by each church, provided there is not an equally efficient one already in operation.

"PLAN 1. A card or book with the names of all the members of the congregation upon it, with columns for weekly, or monthly, or quarterly sums, such as they may voluntarily offer to pay. The sum to be paid either to the Elders, the Deacons, or to persons specially appointed in each district of the congregation.

"2D PLAN. Monthly collections in the church to be divided amongst the Boards, at the discretion of the Deacons, or (in case there be no deacons) of the Session.

"3D. PLAN. A quarterly sermon in behalf of the Boards, (assigning a quarter to each,) to be followed by a collection or subscription for the Board whose cause was advocated in the sermon."

